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General

Oman is located in the SE part of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered on the W by Yemen and Saudi Arabia, on the S by the Arabian Sea, on the NE by the Gulf of Oman, and on the NW by the United Arab Emirates. The country includes the islands of Kuria Muria and Al Masirah which lie off the SE coast. In addition, the detached province of Ru'us al Jibal is located at the extremity of the promontory (Musandam Peninsula) forming the S side of the entrance to the Persian Gulf. This province also includes the islands lying close off the promontory. The Sultanate of Oman was formerly known as the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman until 1970.

The country consists of a vast central desert plain with rugged mountains in the N and S parts. Al Batinah, a fertile coastal plain, extends NW of Masqat for over 150 miles.

The climate is mostly dry desert; it is hot and humid along the coast, but is hot and dry inland. The southernmost part of the country is subject to a Southwest Monsoon in the summer (May to September).

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.

Currency

The official unit of currency is the Omani rial, consisting of 1,000 baiza.

Firing Areas

Naval firing practices (surface to surface and surface to air) and other exercises take place within the following areas:

1. **Area Tahr (D37).**—an area bounded by lines joining the following positions:
 - a. 24°18.00'N, 54°40.00'E.
 - b. 24°00.00'N, 58°39.00'E.
 - c. 23°51.75'N, 58°20.00'E.
 - d. 23°51.75'N, 58°06.00'E.
 - e. 24°09.00'N, 57°40.00'E.
2. **Daymaniyat Naval Gunfire Support Range.**—an area bounded by lines joining the following positions:
 - a. 23 51.75'N, 58 06.00'E.
 - b. 23 51.75'N, 58 20.00'E.
 - c. 24 01.70'N, 58 20.00'E.
 - d. 23 53.90'N, 58 02.60'E
3. **Area Umm al Fayyarin (D38).**—an area bounded by the segment of a circle 5 miles in radius centered on 26 11'N, 56 30'E from 020 clockwise to 160 .

4. **Area Jazirat al Ghanam (R15).**—an area bounded by the segment of a circle 5 miles in radius centered on 26 24'N, 56 23'E from 040 clockwise to 250 and then 10 miles in radius centered on the same point from 250 clockwise to 040 .

5. **Area Jazirat Ghazant (D57).**—an area bounded by the segment of a circle 10 miles in radius centered on 17 36.7'N, 56 08.2'E clockwise from 17 35.83'N, 55 57.75'E to 17 28.5'N, 56 14.22'E, and then a straight line back to 17 35.83'N, 55 57.75'E.

6. **Area Marbat (D65).**—an area bounded by lines joining the following positions:

- a. 16 53'N, 54 30'E.
- b. 16 53'N, 54 10'E.
- c. 16 13'N, 54 10'E.
- d. 16 13'N, 54 30'E.

7. **Area Ras Hamar (D67).**—an area bounded by lines joining the following positions:

- a. 16 42'N, 53 54'E.
- b. 16 40'N, 53 34'E.
- c. 16 25'N, 53 37'E.
- d. 16 28'N, 53 58'E.

8. **Area Abu Rasas (D20).**—an area bounded by lines joining the following positions:

- a. 20 15.5'N, 58 32.1'E.
- b. 19 54.0'N, 58 09.1'E.
- c. 19 43.2'N, 58 21.0'E.
- d. 20 04.7'N, 58 43.9'E.

9. **Area Al Hadri (D41).**—an area of a circle with a radius of 1 mile centered on 20 35'20"N, 58 53'08"E.

Details of firing exercises within the above areas will be broadcast as warnings by Bahrain Radio (A9M) on 500 kHz, normally 3 days in advance. Vessels are advised to avoid these areas, or if it is necessary to enter them, to proceed with caution.

Government



Flag of Oman

Oman, an independent sovereign state, is a hereditary absolute monarchy ruled by a Sultan, who is both the chief of

state and head of government. The Sultan legislates by decree and appoints a cabinet to assist him.

The Majlis al-Dwala (upper chamber) consists of 48 members, appointed by the Sultan, who have advisory powers only. The Majlis al-Shura (lower chamber) consists of 83 members, who are directly elected by a limited number of voters, although the Sultan has final authority over the make-up of the body, which debates domestic issues, but has no legislative or veto powers.

The legal system is based on English common law and Islamic law, with ultimate appeal to the Sultan.

The capital is Masqat (Muscat).

Holidays

The following holiday is observed:

Omani National Days	November 17-18
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Islamic holidays, which are subject to the appearance of the moon, include Eid Al-Fitr (End of Ramadan), Eid Al-Adha (End of Pilgrimage), Hijrah (Islamic New Year), Ascension of the Prophet, and the Prophet's Birthday.

Industries

Crude oil production and refining are the predominant industries. There is also some natural gas production, copper mining and smelting, cement, and textile production. Agriculture and fishing are the traditional way of life. Crops include dates, limes, alfalfa, bananas, and vegetables.

Languages

The official language is Arabic. English, Baluchi, Urdu, and several Indian dialects are also used.

Mined Areas

Vessels are advised that mined areas exist in the N part of the Persian Gulf. Further information should be obtained from the local authorities. Mine sightings should be reported to the naval authorities by INMARSAT (150 5612) or to Coalition naval vessels on VHF channel 13 or 16. Details of areas reported to be dangerous due to mines are also promulgated by Notice to Mariners issued by the Middle East Navigation Aids Service (MENAS) and by MARAD advisories.

Regulations

General

The master or owner of every ship shall be held directly responsible for the proper conduct and behavior of the crew and for strict observance of the laws of the Sultanate of Oman, particularly those laws concerning the sale, transference or consumption of any narcotic or alcoholic or intoxicating drink of any kind.

Vessels calling at the ports of Oman are required to have a copy of the local rules and regulations aboard. Vessels without a copy must obtain one as early as possible on arrival.

Anchorage

All vessels anchoring within the territorial waters of the Sultanate of Oman (12 miles), for the purpose of waiting for orders or in order to carry out engine repairs, should anchor within the latitudes of 23°53'N and 23°40'N, and between the longitudes of 58°10'E and 58°27'E. No other anchorage in this area may be used except when actually loading or discharging at SBM buoys.

All vessels using this anchorage must contact Mina Qabus Port Control on VHF channel 16 and give the following information:

1. Flag or port of registry.
2. Call sign.
3. DWT, GRT, and NRT.
4. Ports of call, including last port and next port.
5. Whether the vessel is carrying dangerous or hazardous cargo.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is DELTA (-4). Daylight Savings Time is not observed.

World Time Zone Chart

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ref/pdf/802801.pdf>

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is located on Jameat A'Duwal Al Arabiya Street, Al Khuwair area, Muscat.

The mailing address is P.O. Box 202, Postal Code 115, Madinat-al Sultan Qaboos, Muscat.

U. S. Embassy Oman Home Page

<http://www.usa.gov.om>